

The Synergy of Success: Organizational Management, Staff Professionalism, Transformational Leadership as Drivers of State University Productivity

¹Roxan A. Tamondong*, ²Nenita I. Prado

¹Professor, Mindanao State University, Marawi City, Philippines

²Liceo de Cagayan University, Cagayan de Oro City, Philippines

DOI: <https://dx.doi.org/10.47772/IJRISS.2026.10200581>

Received: 28 February 2026; Accepted: 03 March 2026; Published: 21 March 2026

ABSTRACT

By examining the interplay between internal organizational drivers – organizational management, staff professionalism, and transformational leadership – this study sought to understand how institutions navigate the “tri-focal” demands of instruction, research, and community involvement. Using a descriptive-correlational research design, the study analyzed perspectives from 325 higher education faculty members across four premier state universities in Region X, Northern Mindanao, Philippines. The findings revealed a compelling “Management Paradox.” Although many universities cling to traditional bureaucratic structures for stability, a flexible, systems-oriented approach is perceived as more effective for managing modern institutional challenges. Results indicate a strong, statistically significant positive correlation between all predictor variables and institutional productivity, with coefficients (r) ranging from 0.639 to 0.783. However, while these associations are robust, they represent perceived interconnectedness rather than established causation. To enhance the objectivity of future assessments, it is recommended that subsequent research incorporate quantifiable metrics such as publication counts, extension income, and formal accreditation levels.

Keywords: institutional productivity, organizational management paradigms, management paradox, transformational leadership, descriptive correlation

INTRODUCTION

The contemporary higher education landscape is defined by intense global competition and a VUCA environment—volatility in funding, uncertainty in market demands, complexity in governance, and ambiguity in educational instruction. In this turbulent climate, state universities are compelled to demonstrate effectiveness across multiple indicators, extending beyond traditional teaching to include outcome-based education, impactful research, and sustainable operations. Forging this requires a delicate balance between rigorous regulatory compliance and fostering an innovative intellectual culture.

Globalization has intensified the pressure on nations to align their higher education systems with international university rankings and accreditation standards, focusing on strategic planning, quality measurement, and institutional branding. University rankings can directly and significantly influence graduates’ employability prospects [1]. Regionally, the ASEAN Roadmap for Higher Education Space 2025 emphasizes student and faculty mobility and harmonized quality assurance [2]. This is viewed as a catalyst for economic and sociocultural development by improving institutional productivity and deepening internationalization. In the Philippines, state universities and Colleges (SUCs) are mandated by the 1987 Constitution and the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) to provide quality instruction, advance relevant and impactful research, actively engage with communities, and demonstrate progressive leadership [3]. However, persistent challenges impede their productivity: despite substantial government funding, many SUCs exhibited poor Research and Development (R&D) output [4]. While voluntary accreditation through the Accrediting Agency of Chartered Colleges and Universities in the Philippines (AACUP) serves as a vital mechanism for accountability and credibility [5], systemic internal issues persist.

Although literature on global university rankings, internationalization strategies, and higher education policy is abundant, there is a critical scholarly gap regarding the internal organizational drivers of SUC productivity. Specifically, the roles of organizational management, staff professionalism, and transformational leadership remain under-researched in the Philippine context. Existing studies in regions like the Zamboanga Peninsula and Basilan have highlighted bureaucratic inefficiency and transparency gaps. Yet empirical evidence linking leadership style and workforce professionalism in overall university productivity is scarce [6] [7].

Aligned with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), specifically, SDG 4 (Quality Education) by promoting quality higher education, SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth) by fostering continuous staff development and professional growth, SDG 9 (Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure) by stimulating increased research and innovation capabilities and SDG 17 (Partnership for the Goals) by cultivating a stronger collaborative partnerships and institutional effectiveness, this study endeavors to enhanced effectiveness and societal impact of state universities in the Philippines and potentially in similar global contexts.

Framework

This study is grounded in the confluence of multiple theories, each offering unique yet complementary perspectives on the drivers of the state university performance. First, the Resource-Based View (RBV), as posited by Jay B. Barney in 1991, asserts that sustained competitive advantage arises from the organization's distinct resources, especially those that are valuable, rare, inimitable, and non-substitutable, for knowledge-intensive organizations such as universities, these internal assets, including faculty expertise, research strengths, and organizational culture are critical determinants of institutional performance. The applicability of RBV to this study lies in its capacity to illuminate how effective leadership and management strategies can leverage these internal resources to enhance state university productivity. As Vasudevan [8] highlights, RBV provides a framework for higher education institutions to strategically mobilize and optimize their existing resources, thereby increasing productivity and improving the quality of educational services. Furthermore, RBV's utility as a management tool for strategic resource allocation, noting that the greater value, sustainability, and versatility of a university's resources are, the stronger its competitive position, a principle directly relevant to enhancing overall productivity [9].

Building upon the importance of internal resources highlighted by RVB, Human Capital Theory (HCT), pioneered by Becker in 1964, holds that investment in education, training, and career development augments human capabilities, thereby driving enhanced productivity and broader economic advancement. This theoretical perspective asserts that organizations, including universities, accrue significant benefits from strategically investing in their personnel's competence and skills. Within the context of this study, staff professionalism and continuous professional development emerge as critical determinants of state university productivity. The premise is that well-trained, professionally developed teaching and administrative staff become more effective contributors to the core functions of pedagogy, research, and university governance, aligning with the study's examination of the impact of organizational management and staff professionalism on institutional output. The findings of Amie-Ogan and Pepple [10] in their study of the University of Rivers State in Nigeria demonstrate that human capital development programs such as sabbatical leave and ICT training can positively influence staff performance.

Complementing the emphasis on strategic internal resources (RBV) and the development of human capital (HCT) as drivers of organizational productivity, Transformational Leadership Theory (TLT), extended by Bass (1985) from Burns' (1978) concept of transforming leadership, offers a crucial perspective on how leadership can unlock and amplify these internal capabilities. TLT posits a process wherein leaders and followers engage in a mutually enhancing relationship, fostering important levels of morale and motivation. This dynamic empowers inspired employees to achieve significant outcomes by instilling self-confidence and enabling decision-making through proper training [11]. In the context of university management, transformational leadership is an effective tool for facilitating organizational transformation, particularly in critical areas such as financing, educational quality, research, and societal relationships [12]. Furthermore, emphasizing the critical role of implementing transformational leadership within state universities to effectively navigate the challenges of globalization and technological advancements [13]. Thus, TLT provides a vital framework for understanding

how leadership style can directly influence staff professionalism and, consequently, the overall productivity of state universities, the central focus of this inquiry.

Objectives of the Study

This study aimed to determine whether organizational management, staff professionalism, and transformational leadership are significantly related to productivity in state universities in Region X - Northern Mindanao, Philippines. Specifically, it sought to answer the following questions:

1. What is the level of organizational management approach of the state universities in terms of:
 - 1.1 Classical Organization Approach;
 - 1.2 Neo-classical Approach;
 - 1.3 Contingency Approach; and
 - 1.4 Systems Approach?
2. What is the level of staff professionalism in terms of:
 - 2.1 Interpersonal Skills;
 - 2.2 Image, Conduct, and Attitudes; and
 - 2.3 Career Advancement?
3. What is the level of transformational leadership among top administrators of state universities as perceived by faculty in terms of:
 - 3.1 Intellectual Stimulation;
 - 3.2 Inspirational Motivation;
 - 3.3 Individualized Consideration; and
 - 3.4 Idealized Influence?
4. What is the level of productivity among the state universities in terms of:
 - 4.1 Curriculum and Instruction;
 - 4.2 Support to Students;
 - 4.3 Research; and
 - 4.4 Extension and Community Involvement?
5. Is there a significant relationship between the productivity among the state universities and the following variables:
 - 5.1 Organizational Management;
 - 5.2 Staff Professionalism; and
 - 5.3 Transformational Leadership?

Hypotheses

The following null hypothesis was tested at a 0.05 level of significance.

H₀₁: There is no significant relationship between the level of productivity among state universities and organizational management, staff professionalism, or transformational leadership.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

To map the intricate relationships among variables, this study employed a quantitative, descriptive-correlational research design. This method works especially well for providing a thorough description of a phenomenon while examining the connections between variables without the need for outside intervention or manipulation [14]. Furthermore, it is also important to note that, even though these factors are regarded as “drivers”, the study aims to uncover strong correlations rather than conclusive causal linkages. Because institutional productivity likely operates in a reciprocal environment in which high performance further encourages professional conduct, management, and leadership efficacy, thus it is crucial to recognize this causal ambiguity.

Research Setting

This study was conducted during the second semester of the Academic Year 2025-2026 across four premier state universities in Region X, Northern Mindanao: Bukidnon State University (BukSU), Central Mindanao University (CMU), Mindanao State University-Iligan Institute of Technology (MSU-IIT), and the University of Science and Technology of Southern Philippines (USTP). These institutions were selected based on their established prestige, characterized by high institutional accreditation, global impact rankings, and the presence of programs recognized by the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) as Centers of Excellence and Centers of Development.

Participants and Sampling Procedure

The study involved 325 faculty members, each with at least one year of service across the four state universities. The sample size was determined using the Raosoft Sample Size Calculator, with a 95% confidence level and a 5% margin of error. To ensure the representativeness of the sample, the research adopted a proportionate stratified random sampling technique. This probability sampling method involves dividing the population into subgroups (strata) based on certain characteristics, then selecting a proportional number of individuals from each stratum to be included in the sample [15]. This technique was specifically chosen to guarantee that each of the four participating state universities would be proportionally represented in the sample, mirroring their actual distribution within the overall faculty population. Additionally, the proportional allocation of sample sizes across universities was designed to accurately reflect the varied perceptions concerning university productivity, transformational leadership, staff professionalism, and organizational management within the broader institutional framework.

Research Instruments

The survey instrument, with four distinct parts composed of 15 questions each, was strategically constructed using a combination of established and adapted measures as well as researcher-developed items grounded in multiple literatures. Specifically, the assessment for Organizational Management was based on the literature by Ferdous [16], Dsiak [17], Fiedler [18], and Garima [19]. The questions used to evaluate the professionalism of administrative staff were drawn from the literature of Miles [20], Brewster et al. [21], Lamri and Lubart [22], Hollenbaugh [23], Dong et al. [24], and Karim [25]. Moreover, the assessment of transformational leadership was conducted using a modified version of The Survey of Transformational Leadership (STL): Program Staff Version, originally developed by Texas Christian University [26]. Furthermore, to contextualize the study within the Philippine higher education landscape and to specifically address factors relevant to state university productivity, pertinent items from the Accrediting Agency of Chartered Colleges and Universities in the

Philippines (AACCCUP) survey instrument were adapted and integrated [27]. These items focused on the critical dimensions of curriculum and instruction, student support services, research, and extension & community involvement. These adapted items were carefully refined to align with the specific focus on faculty perception of productivity. The remaining sections of the questionnaire, designed to assess organizational management and staff professionalism, were developed by the researcher, drawing upon relevant theoretical frameworks and the specific characteristics of state universities in the Philippine context.

To quantify participants' level of agreement with the various questionnaire statements, a five-point Likert scale was used, allowing participants to indicate the intensity of their attitudes or opinions towards each statement [28], ranging from "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree". This method yielded quantifiable data suitable for statistical analysis, enabling a nuanced examination of faculty perception across the identified variables.

While faculty perceptions provide invaluable insights into the internal climate of state universities, the reliance on self-reported data from a single participant group introduces the potential for Common Method Variance (CMV) [29]. This study acknowledges that such variance can sometimes lead to inflated correlations; however, identifying these perceived relationship remains a critical first step in understanding the invisible drivers of institutional success in the Philippine context.

Data Gathering Procedure

Formal approval for this study was secured from the Office of the Dean of the School of Business, Management, and Accountancy (SBMA)-Graduate Studies. To ensure full compliance with institutional standards, ethical clearance was also obtained from the Liceo Research Ethics Board (LREB) of Liceo de Cagayan University.

Following these approvals, formal letters of request were submitted to the Office of the President or Chancellor at the participating campuses. Upon granting permission, the researcher coordinated with the respective deans and department chairpersons to discuss the study's objectives and solicit faculty participation. During these sessions, participants received a comprehensive overview of the study's purpose, procedures, and potential benefits.

Informed consent was strictly observed; participants were informed of their rights, including the voluntary nature of their participation and the right to withdraw at any time. To maintain anonymity, names were excluded from all data collection instruments. For respondents who used the Google Forms link, the institution's name was collected solely to track the distribution of responses across the four state universities. In accordance with the Data Privacy Act of 2012, all physical questionnaires were destroyed by incineration after data validation. Digital datasets were stored in a secure, encrypted environment accessible only to the researcher.

Statistical Treatment and Data Analysis

The study employed a comprehensive statistical approach, utilizing both descriptive and inferential methods to analyze the collected data. Descriptive statistics were employed to address the first four research questions, which aimed to ascertain the levels of organizational management approach, staff professionalism, transformational leadership among university leaders, and the overall productivity of the state university. Specifically, the mean and the standard deviation were calculated for each of these variables.

To investigate the significant relationships posed in the fifth research question – specifically, the association between state university productivity as the dependent variable and the independent variables of organizational management, staff professionalism, and transformational leadership – the Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient was used. This bivariate statistical technique measured both the strength and the direction (positive or negative) of the linear relationship between each pair of variables [30].

Validity and Reliability

The research instrument in this study underwent a content validity test. The questionnaire was scrutinized and evaluated by a panel of three (3) experts: a professor doctor specializing in management and human resources, a professor doctor currently serving as a college dean, and a professor doctor, an active AACCCUP evaluator in

business administration and entrepreneurship. The academic qualifications of the validators ensured that the instrument was rigorously evaluated, as they had the required competencies and experiences. The questionnaire was adjusted as needed in response to expert feedback.

Moreover, the questionnaire underwent a pilot test, with 30 participants from the four sample state universities, to assess its practicality and clarity. Cronbach’s alpha was utilized to determine the internal consistency and reliability of the findings. For the first independent variable, organizational management, the sub-variables classical management approach (0.839), neo-classical management approach (0.914), systems management approach (0.952), and contingency management approach (0.948) indicated high reliability. For the second independent variable on staff professionalism: interpersonal skills (0.963), image, conduct, and attitude (0.974), and career advancement (0.979) also displayed strong reliability. Transformational leadership showed a very high reliability: intellectual stimulation (0.982), inspirational motivation (0.989), individualized consideration (0.975), and idealized influence (0.990). Lastly, the dependent variable productivity likewise proved reliable: Curriculum and instructions (0.973), support to students (0.986), research (0.986), and extension and community involvement (0.991). Overall, all constructs showed very high reliability, meaning that the items in each category consistently measure the intended constructs and that the instrument used in this study is statistically reliable.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. What is the level of organizational management approach of the state universities in terms of:

1.1 Classical Organization Approach;

1.2 Neo-classical Approach;

1.3 Contingency Approach; and

1.4 Systems Approach?

Table 1 Summary of The Level of Organizational Management Among State Universities

Sub-constructs	Mean	SD	Description	Interpretation
Classical Organization Approach	4.21	0.37	Agree	High
Neo-classical Approach	4.16	0.08	Agree	High
Systems Approach	4.32	0.09	Agree	High
Contingency Approach	4.17	0.08	Agree	High
Overall Mean	4.21	0.15	Agree	High

This study surveyed 325 state university faculty members in Northern Mindanao regarding the level of organizational management approach. The results showed high positive agreement across all four management approaches ($M=4.21$; $SD=0.15$), suggesting that no single approach is universally superior; instead, it operates under a hybrid paradigm, as labeled by Woelert and Stensaker as strategic bureaucracy, which merges traditional hierarchical structures with modern strategic leadership [31]. The Systems Approach received the highest mean ($M=4.32$; $SD=0.09$), underscoring the relationships among organizational components and their imperative to adapt to environmental changes [32]. This was followed by Classical Organization Approach ($M=4.21$; $SD=0.37$), which reinforces the value of hierarchical structures, formal authority, and standardized procedures [33]. While the Contingency Approach ($M=4.17$; $SD=0.08$) and the Neo-classical Approach ($M=4.16$; $SD=0.07$) show slightly lower scores, their high means still indicate a significant role in organizational life. Ultimately, the findings suggest that their universities manage through a management of paradox. Rather than selecting a single

best practice, they holistically integrate the strengths of various theories to navigate the complex, often contradictory demands of modern higher education [34]

2. What is the level of staff professionalism in terms of:

2.1 Interpersonal Skills;

2.2 Image, Conduct, and Attitudes; and

2.3 Career Advancement?

Table 2 Summary of The Level of Staff Professionalism Among State Universities

Sub-constructs	Mean	SD	Description	Interpretation
Interpersonal Skills	4.20	0.06	Agree	High
Image, Conduct, and Attitudes	4.26	0.05	Agree	High
Career Advancement	4.17	0.06	Agree	High
Overall Mean	4.21	0.06	Agree	High

Likewise, the study explored the level of professionalism among administrative staff of state universities. It revealed that administrative staff professionalism is high overall (M=4.21; SD=0.06), reflecting a workforce that is ethically grounded and ready for progression. The highest-rated items are Image, Conduct, and Attitudes (M=4.26, SD=0.05), indicating that staff maintain exemplary professional standards as foundational elements for both career growth and organizational effectiveness [35]. This professional demeanor directly influences key performance metrics and organizational commitment [36]. While Interpersonal Skills (M=4.20, SD=0.06) and Career Advancement (M=4.17, SD=0.06) also received high scores. However, the data suggest a strategic opportunity for further refinement. Although the workforce demonstrates exceptional cultural sensitivity and professional image, bridging slight gaps in complex problem-solving and conflict handling is essential.

3. What is the level of transformational leadership among top administrators of state universities as perceived by faculty in terms of:

3.1 Intellectual Stimulation;

3.2 Inspirational Motivation;

3.3 Individualized Consideration; and

3.4 Idealized Influence?

Table 3 Summary of The Level of Transformational Leadership Among State Universities

Sub-constructs	Mean	SD	Description	Interpretation
Intellectual Stimulation	4.24	0.05	Agree	High
Inspirational Motivation	4.25	0.08	Agree	High
Individualized Consideration	4.15	0.11	Agree	High
Idealized Influence	4.33	0.07	Agree	High
Overall Mean	4.24	0.08	Agree	High

Moreover, the study goes deeper in understanding the degree of transformational leadership among state university administrators and found it to be systematically implemented as a High level (M=4.24, SD=0.08), reflecting a systematic practice that positively impacts employee performance and institutional effectiveness. Idealized Influence emerges as the highest-rated dimension (M=4.33; SD=0.07), indicating that leaders embody exemplary ethical standards and values-based conduct, which inspires employees to internalize organizational commitments and demonstrate organizational citizenship [37]. This is followed by strong scores in Inspirational Motivation (M=4.25; SD=0.08), Intellectual Stimulation (M=4.24; SD=0.05), and Individualized Consideration (M=4.24; SD=0.05), which collectively encourage innovation and align employee aspirations with institutional missions. Empirical evidence suggests that this leadership style effectively mediates the relationship between strategic planning and organizational performance [38]. This finding also aligns with Corral's discovery of a direct link between the high-performance and transformational leadership qualities of school administrators and teachers' efficacy [39]. Consistent with Bass's Transformational Leadership Theory, personal development cultivates organizational commitment and resilience.

4. What is the level of productivity among the state universities in terms of:

4.1 Curriculum and Instruction;

4.2 Support to Students;

4.3 Research; and

4.4 Extension and Community Involvement?

Table 4 Summary of The Level of Productivity Among State Universities

Sub-constructs	M	SD	Description	Interpretation
Curriculum and Instruction	4.52	0.06	Strongly Agree	Very High
Support to Students	4.43	0.09	Agree	High
Research	4.36	0.12	Agree	High
Extension and Community Involvement	4.45	0.10	Agree	High
Overall Mean	4.44	0.09	Agree	High

Furthermore, the study examined productivity levels among state universities. The report detailed the evaluation of overall institutional productivity as High (M=4.44), reflecting a mature institutional culture of quality and constituent accountability [40] [41]. Curriculum and Instruction has the highest rating (M=4.52; SD=0.059), driven by transparent grading criteria and students' hands-on experience, underscoring the role of quality design in mediating student outcomes and institutional reputation [42]. This is followed by Community Engagement (M=4.45; SD=0.10) and Support to Students (M=4.43; SD=0.09), the latter affirming a holistic investment in student well-being and retention [43]. While research also yielded a high score (M=4.36), it represented the greatest variability (SD=0.12), suggesting it remains a strategic opportunity for targeted growth. Chavez noted that since research productivity is intrinsically linked to academic excellence and reputation, it requires systematic faculty development and transparent incentives [44].

5. Is there a significant relationship between the productivity among the state universities and the following variables:

5.1 Organizational Management;

5.2 Staff Professionalism; and

5.3 Transformational Leadership?

H₀: There is no significant relationship between the level of productivity among state universities and organizational management, staff professionalism, or transformational leadership.

Table 5 Correlation Analysis Between Productivity Among State Universities and Organizational Management, Staff Professionalism, And Transformational Leadership

Variable	n	r	p	Interpretation
Organizational Management	325	.770**	.000	Significant
Classical Organizational Approach	325	.639**	.000	Significant
Neo-classical Approach	325	.667**	.000	Significant
Systems Approach	325	.736**	.000	Significant
Contingency Approach	325	.720**	.000	Significant
Staff Professionalism	325	.729**	.000	Significant
Interpersonal Skills	325	.668**	.000	Significant
Image, Conduct, And Attitudes	325	.684**	.000	Significant
Career Advancement	325	.698**	.000	Significant
Transformational Leadership	325	.783**	.000	Significant
Intellectual Stimulation	325	.732**	.000	Significant
Inspirational Motivation	325	.759**	.000	Significant
Individualized Consideration	325	.706**	.000	Significant
Idealized Influence	325	.745**	.000	Significant

. p-values of .000, significant at $p < .001$.

*Correlation is significant at the 0.05

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Also, the study examines the relationship between productivity among state universities of Northern Mindanao and organizational management, staff professionalism, and transformational leadership. The correlation analysis confirms a strong, statistically significant positive relationship between all 14 predictor variables and state university productivity. Pearson product-moment correlation coefficients (r) range from 0.639 to 0.783, all exceeding the 0.50 threshold for a large effect size (Cohen, 1988). With $p < .001$ across all measures, the probability of these strong associations occurring by chance is less than 0.1%, providing a definitive empirical basis for rejecting the Null Hypothesis (H₀) [45] [46]. The analysis identifies Transformational Leadership ($r=0.783$) and Organizational Management ($r=0.770$) as the primary correlates of institutional improvement. Even the lowest correlation, the Classical Organizational Approach ($r=0.639$), remains firmly within the strong effect size range, underscoring the multivariate nature of productivity [47][48]. It is critical to note that while r values indicate a strong positive association, these results demonstrate interconnectedness rather than direct causation [49]. These findings suggest that as leaders become more transformational and management becomes

more systematic, there is a concurrent rise in perceived productivity. However, these variables likely exist in a reciprocal relationship in which high productivity also empowers leaders and motivates staff.

While the findings provide strong empirical evidence for the synergy of internal drivers, certain methodological limitations must be acknowledged. Because data for both independent (organizational management, staff professionalism, and transformational leadership) and dependent (productivity) variables were collected via self-reported survey questionnaires from the same faculty participants, there is a risk of common method bias. This may lead to inflated correlations due to the singular perspective of participants' singular perspectives. Additionally, since the study evaluates institutional output through the lens of faculty perceptions rather than tangible administrative records, the results reflect subjective experiences that may diverge from objective reality; consequently, future research should integrate standardized productivity indicators to validate these perceptions.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings, the following conclusions are put forward:

State universities exhibit high adherence to organizational management in terms of systems, classical organization, contingency, and neo-classical approaches, reflecting a hybrid management that operates within a management paradox. This suggests that no single approach guarantees institutional effectiveness; instead, productivity emerges from an integrated and multifaceted approach that lies in navigating this paradox by balancing strict regulatory compliance and classical hierarchy through a holistic and interconnected view of its diverse units with the goal not to solve contradictions but to manage the tension between them as a source of institutional resilience.

Similarly, administrative staff possess a high level of professional maturity and institutional readiness regarding image, conduct, and attitudes, interpersonal skills, and career advancement. They are well-positioned to support the strategic goals of their respective institutions, suggesting that administrative staff represent a stable, highly competent human capital asset and that advancing formal mentorship and coaching programs can further strengthen them.

Moreover, state university leaders demonstrate a high level of transformational leadership characterized by idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration, serving as the institution's moral compass and visionary aligner. This implies that leaders nurture a culture of trust and ethical integrity by bridging the gap between institutional mandates and personal employee development through personal coaching and direct staff support.

State universities demonstrate high-level adherence to institutional productivity across curriculum and instruction, extension and community involvement, support to students and research, reflecting a mature institutional quality culture. While these institutions effectively align learning outcomes with industry requirements and fulfill their social mandates, their significant research potential remains underutilized due to systemic constraints in funding and mentorship. This suggests that institutionalizing university-funded research grants, establishing structured mentorship programs, and revising faculty workload policies can scale up research productivity to match that of other high-performing functions.

Additionally, there is a strong, positive, and highly significant relationship between state university productivity and the three primary constructs: organizational management, staff professionalism, and transformational leadership. However, this does not imply a unidirectional causal link. The variables likely to exist in a reciprocal relationship further bolsters institutional success, leaders' confidence, and staff morale.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Given the profound impact of leadership on institutional productivity, it is recommended that the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) formalize a Biannual Leadership Academy for SUC Presidents focused on personal mastery and adaptive management to sustain high levels of transformational leadership. This initiative,

complemented by sustained funding for faculty study grants and incentive-based laboratory upgrades, will empower state universities to fulfill their multifaceted mandates effectively.

Higher Education Institutions are encouraged to adopt a hybrid management paradigm that balances centralized structural efficiency with the flexibility required for creative innovation. By streamlining bureaucratic protocols and simplifying paperwork, institutions can establish faster transactions while providing administrative staff with meaningful opportunities to contribute to development.

While visionary leadership is currently high, administrators should transition from collective management to personalized coaching through one-on-one feedback and developmental checks. To stabilize extension work, leadership must optimize the balance between teaching and community service workloads while offering localized awards for high-impact research projects.

The institutionalization of formal mentoring programs is essential to bridge gaps in career advancement by pairing seasoned administrators with junior staff for effective knowledge transfer. Furthermore, institutions should fortify the OPCR and IPCR frameworks to cultivate robust, multidimensional feedback loops that drive organizational excellence.

Faculty members should spearhead interdisciplinary research that aligns rigid policies with modern educational needs while utilizing institutional feedback mechanisms to report on leadership operations. Additionally, integrating service-learning programs into the student curriculum will create a vital link between classroom instruction and community extension services.

Community stakeholders should be reimagined as active co-producers of knowledge, ensuring that university programs remain strictly aligned with national development priorities. To address weaknesses in research income, extension programs should be co-designed with these stakeholders to commercialize products that meet actual community needs.

Future researchers are encouraged to move beyond perception-based data and include objective indicators, such as verified publication counts, extension income, and formal accreditation levels, to provide a more robust analysis of productivity. They are also urged to include a more diverse range of state universities and colleges, as well as private HEIs, to explore the live experiences of stakeholders in smaller institutional contexts.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

This study reached completion through the collective support of many. The author expresses deepest thanks to the research adviser and panel of examiners for their rigorous critique and unwavering encouragement. Recognition is also due to the Commission on Higher Education (CHED-SIKAP) for the financial backing that facilitated this work, and to the participants, without whom this inquiry would not have been feasible.

REFERENCES

1. Shahabuddin, M. (2022). An interactive guide to performing well in the QS World University Rankings. ResearchGate. <https://doi.org/10.13140/RG.2.2.14850.56006>
2. ASEAN Secretariat. (2022, July). ASEAN Higher Education Space 2025. https://asean.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/ASEAN-Higher-Education-Space-2025_rev-1.pdf
3. Department of Budget and Management. (2022, May 25). National Budget Circular No. 589: Revised rates of representation and transportation allowances (RATA). <https://www.dbm.gov.ph/wp-content/uploads/Issuances/2022/National-Budget-Circular/NATIONAL-BUDGET-CIRCULAR-NO-589-DATED-MAY-25-2022.pdf>
4. Regadio, C. Q., Jr., & Tullao, T.S., Jr. (2015). The role of the government in enhancing research productivity of SUCs and private HEIs in the Philippines. Researchgate.net. <https://doi.org/10.13140/RG.2.1.2591.2161>

5. Liquido, M. G. E. (2018). The accreditation of state universities and colleges in the Philippines: Governance, hegemony relationship and dichotomy of ownership. *Basic Research Journal of Education Research and Review*, 1(1), 6–17. <http://www.basicresearchjournals.org>
6. Sulasula, J., & Moreno, F. (2023, July 26). Public service delivery system in state universities and colleges: Controversies and best practices across frontline services. SSRN. <https://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.4521207>
7. Indama, A.C., & Salain, S.A. (2023). The extent of bureaucratic red-tape in selected frontline services of Basilan State College: Its impact to public service delivery. *International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research and Publications (IJMRAP)*, 5(10), 126-132
8. Vasudevan, H. (2021). Resource-based view theory application on the educational service quality. *International Journal of Engineering Applied Sciences and Technology*, 6(6), 174-186. <https://doi.org/10.33564/ijeast.2021.v06i06.026>
9. Silva, R.O., Ferreira, J.A., Souza, S.S., Soares, M.L., & Silva, D.D. (2021). The resource-based vision as a management instrument in the institutionalization of distance education in higher education / A visão baseada em recursos como instrumento de gestão na institucionalização da educação a distância no ensino superior. *Brazilian Journal of Business*, 3(1), 477-493. <https://doi.org/10.34140/bjbv3n4-022>
10. Amie-Ogan, T.O & Pepple, E.A. (2021). Human capital development for enhancing academic staff performance in universities in Rivers State. *International Journal of Innovative Development and Policy Studies*, 9(2), 1-13.
11. Khan, H., Rehmat, M., Butt, T. H., Farooqi, S., & Asim, J. (2020). Impact of transformational leadership on work performance, burnout and social loafing: a mediation model. *Future Business Journal*, 6(1), 1-13. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s43093-020-00043-8>.
12. Moreno-Freites, Z., & Pérez-Ortega, G. (2019). Model of relationship of transformational leadership and university management. *DYNA*, 86(210), 9–16. <https://doi.org/10.15446/dyna.v86n210.78035>
13. Azarcon, R.O. (2019). Transformational leadership and bureaucracy in a state university: Can they work together? *SSRN Electronic Journal*. <https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.3484506>.
14. Rufino, A. J., Federio, R. H., Bermillo, M. A., & Tus, J. (2022). The social support and its relationship to the college students' burnout amidst the online learning modality. *Psych Education*, 2022(PEMJ0). <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.6534345>
15. Makwana, D., Engineer, P., Dabhi, A., & Chudasama, H. (2023). Sampling methods in research: A review. *International Journal of Trend in Scientific Research and Development*, 7(3), 762–768. <https://www.ijtsrd.com/papers/ijtsrd57470.pdf>
16. Ferdous, J. (2016). Organization theories: From classical perspective. *International Journal of Business, Economics and Law*, 9(2), 1-7. https://www.ijbel.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/K9_11.pdf
17. Dziak, M. (2024). Classical management theory. EBSCO. <https://www.ebsco.com/research-starters/business-and-management/classical-management-theory>
18. Fiedler, F. E. (1964). A contingency model of leadership effectiveness. *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology*, 1, 149–190. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0065-2601\(08\)60051-9](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0065-2601(08)60051-9)
19. Garima (2019). Global journal of engineering science and researches: Overview of classical and neo-classical theory of management. *Global Journal of Engineering Science and Researches*, 6(6), 239-242. <https://www.gjesr.com/Issues%20PDF/Archive-2019/June-2019/IDSTM-2019/35.pdf>
20. Miles, M. (2022, October 3). Redefining professionalism in the workplace. BetterUp. <https://www.google.com/search?q=https://www.betterup.com/blog/redefining-professionalism>
21. Brewster, L., Jones, E., Priestley, M., Wilbraham, S. J., Spanner, L., & Hughes, G. (2022). Look after the staff and they would look after the students' cultures of wellbeing and mental health in the university setting. *Journal of Further and Higher Education*, 46(4), 548-560. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0309877X.2021.1986473>.
22. Lamri, J., & Lubart, T. (2023). Reconciling hard skills and soft skills in a common framework: The generic skills component approach. *Journal of Intelligence*, 11(6), Article 107. <https://www.mdpi.com/2079-3200/11/6/107>
23. Hollenbaugh, E. E. (2021). Self-presentation in social media: Review and research opportunities. *Review of communication research*, 9, 80. <https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/0d12/7a9b52c62fc77b6ee37478e9bdbb796e88a7.pdf>

24. Dong, M., van Prooijen, J. W., & van Lange, P. A. (2024). Status cues and moral judgment: Formal attire induces moral favoritism but not for hypocrites. *Current Psychology*, 43(21), 19247-19263. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12144-024-05747-6>
25. Karim, M., Choudhury, M., & Bin Latif, W. (2019). The impact of training and development on employees' performance: An analysis of quantitative data. *The International Journal of Business and Management Research*, 7(1) 25-33.
26. Institute of Behavioral Research. (2009). Survey of Transformational Leadership (TCU STL). Texas Christian University. <https://ibr.tcu.edu/wp-content/uploads/2013/06/tcom-STL-S-sg.pdf>
27. AACUP. (2014) Survey Questionnaire for BS Accountancy. AACUP.
28. Mcleod, S. (2023). Likert scale questionnaire: examples and analysis. *Simply Psychology*. <https://www.simplypsychology.org/likert-scale.html>
29. Fuller, C. M., Simmering, M. J., Atinc, G., Atinc, Y., & Babin, B. J. (2016). Common methods variance detection in business research. *Journal of Business Research*, 69(8), 3192–3198. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2015.12.008>
30. Wilson, L. T. (2018). Pearson Product-Moment Correlation. <https://www.semanticscholar.org/paper/Pearson-Product-Moment-Correlation-Wilson/053c33b2b2df774a9342e5ee42cb46a44af514a4>
31. Woelert, P., & Stensaker, B. (2025). Strategic bureaucracy: The convergence of bureaucratic and strategic management logics in the organizational restructuring of universities. *Minerva*, 63(1), 1–21. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11024-024-09535-1>
32. Suntsova, O. (2025). Evolution of management theories in the context of business communication. *Financial and Credit Systems: Prospects for Development*, 3(3), 154–165. <https://doi.org/10.26565/2786-4995-2025-3-17>
33. Talaoui, Y. (2023). The situation of incommensurability in strategic management. *Symphonya Emerging Issues in Management*, 24(1), 74–92. <https://doi.org/10.4468/2023.01.06talaoui>
34. Luchko, H., & Duhin, O. (2024). The paradoxical nature of organizational change company: A theoretical foundation and key concepts. *Ekonomika ta Suspilstvo*, (64). <https://doi.org/10.32782/2524-0072/2024-64-78>
35. Uy, G., Tiu, T., & Garcia, D. (2025). Enhancing security workforce efficiency: Investigating stress, attitudes, and performance dynamics. *Journal of Economics, Management and Trade*, 31(2), 11–18. <https://doi.org/10.9734/jemt/2025/v31i21269>
36. Partoza, A. F., & Urbina, M. C. (2025). Workplace stress, work attitude and job satisfaction of clinic-based radiologic technologists in the province of Laguna. *International Journal of Academic Research in Progressive Education and Development*, 14(2), 241–261. <https://doi.org/10.6007/ijarped/v14-i2/25237>
37. Apdian, V. G. & Prado, N. I. (2024). Transformational leadership, cultural intelligence, self-efficacy, and productivity among higher education faculty: A structural model. *JPAIR Multidisciplinary Research Journal*, 55(1), 203-233. <https://doi.org/10.7719/jpair.v55i1.876>
38. Habeeb, Y. O., & Eyupoglu, S. (2024). Strategic planning, transformational leadership and organization performance: Driving forces for sustainability in higher education in Nigeria. *Sustainability*, 16(11), 4348. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su16114348>
39. Corral, M. D. O. (2025). Transformational leadership qualities, performance of school administrators and teachers self-efficacy: Basis for transformational leadership model. *Journal of Information Systems Engineering & Management*, 10(6), 1–13. <https://doi.org/10.52783/jisem.v10i6s.742>
40. Whittaker, J. A., & Montgomery, B. (2025). Reimagining a path from institutional willingness to readiness: Ecosystem variables that promote or impede sustainable transformation in higher education. *Frontiers in Education*, 10, 1571030. <https://doi.org/10.3389/feduc.2025.1571030>
41. Johnson, L. D. (2025). Measuring globalization in higher education: Developing a scorecard for social impact and academic excellence. *Global Journal of Innovation Studies*, 1(1), 1–18. <https://doi.org/10.63665/gjis.v1.23>
42. Fu, Y. (2024). Optimising curriculum quality assessment in application-oriented universities: A student-centric approach using entropy and cloud model. *European Journal of Education*, 59(4), 793–809. <https://doi.org/10.1111/ejed.12801>

43. Mabwe, K., Jaffar, K., Chiyaka, E. T., & Sithole, A. (2025). Mapping the global landscape of student support services in higher education: A scoping review. *Journal of Studies in Education*, 15(4), 11–26. <https://doi.org/10.5296/jse.v15i4.23203>

44. Chavez, J. (2025). Exploring faculty and research development strategies among top-ranked VISMIN universities in the Asian University rankings. *Journal of Education and Social Sciences Research*, 2(2), 1–17. <https://doi.org/10.62596/j34e0m77>

45. Yamoah, E., Offei-gyekyi, F., & Forson, J. (2024). Enhancing workplace productivity: The nexus of organizational culture and policies in public institutions. *Journal of Human Resource Management*, 27(1), 1–11. <https://doi.org/10.46287/nfhx9342>

46. Wellem, I., Budiyanto, & Suwitho. (2025). Professionalism and workload on performance: OCB as a moderator. *Management Business and Research Quarterly*, 3(4), 11–20. <https://doi.org/10.32038/mbrq.2025.34.02>

47. Cahyono, N. D. (2024). Enhancing organizational effectiveness through transformational leadership: A comprehensive analysis. *Global Journal of Economic and Business*, 2(8), 125–134. <https://doi.org/10.59613/global.v2i8.270>

48. Palla, R. S., Kalita, T., Muniswamy, B. K., & Vinothalakshmi, J. (2025). The impact of transformational leadership on employee motivation and organizational performance. *International Journal of Management, Business and Trade*, 1(2), 1–18. <https://doi.org/10.63856/btjtn05>

49. Andersen, R., Thomakos, D., & Wood, G. (2025). Common method variance (CMV) bias: Its implications, how to detect it, and how to handle it. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 36(1), 1–25. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13678868.2025.2537161>

APPENDICES

A. Operational Definition of Constructs

Construct	Operational Definition	Sample Item	Source	Cronbach's Alpha	Scale/Response Format
Organizational Management	Specific strategies employed to align institutional operations with national mandates. This is used to analyze the administrative modalities and management protocols utilized by top executives.	<p><i>Classical Organization Approach</i></p> <p>“The state university follows a hierarchical levels and formal lines of authority in its organizational structure.”</p> <p><i>Neo-classical Approach</i></p> <p>“The state university promotes employee participation and involvement in decision-making processes”</p> <p><i>Systems Approach</i></p> <p>The state university’s administrative decisions consider the impact on the entire university system, not just individual departments.</p> <p><i>Contingency Approach</i></p>	Based on the literature of Ferdous [16], Dsiak [17], Fiedler [18] and Garima [19]	0.749, 0.914, 0.952 and 0.948 respectively	5-point Likert Scale 5=Strongly Agree 4=Agree 3=Neutral 2=Disagree 1=Strongly Disagree

		The state university can effectively allocate resources based on the changing priorities and needs of the organization.			
Staff Professionalism	The consistent demonstration of technical competence, ethical integrity, and unwavering adherence to established institutional protocols. This is used to measure the professionalism of administrative staff	<p><i>Interpersonal Skills</i></p> <p>“The administrative staff effectively listens to and understands the concerns and needs of students, faculty, and external stakeholders.”</p> <p><i>Image, Conduct and Attitudes</i></p> <p>“The administrative staff presents themselves professionally and maintains a positive image.”</p> <p><i>Career Advancement</i></p> <p>“The state university provides clear and transparent career advancement paths for administrative staff.”</p>	Based on the literature of Miles [20], Brewster et al. [21], Lamri and Lubart [22], Hollenbaugh [23], Dong et al. [24] and Karim [25]	0.963, 0.974 and 0.979 respectively	5-point Likert Scale 5=Strongly Agree 4=Agree 3=Neutral 2=Disagree 1=Strongly Disagree
Transformational Leadership	A leadership style characterized by its capacity to cultivate a high-performance organizational climate, where leadership behaviors are intentionally aligned employees’ professionalism. This is used to assess the preferred leadership archetype for administrators in state universities.	<p><i>Intellectual Stimulation</i></p> <p>“The leaders of the state university encourage and values ideas from others”</p> <p><i>Inspirational Motivation</i></p> <p>“The leaders of the state university convey hope about the future of the university.”</p> <p><i>Individualized Consideration</i></p> <p>“The leaders of the state university offer individual learning opportunities to staff members for professional growth.”</p> <p><i>Idealized Influence</i></p> <p>“The leaders of the state university consider the ethical implications of actions.”</p>	Adapted and modified from Institute of Behavioral Research [26]	0.982, 0.989, 0.975 and 0.990 accordingly	5-point Likert Scale 5=Strongly Agree 4=Agree 3=Neutral 2=Disagree 1=Strongly Disagree
Productivity	This is the ultimate benchmark for how effective a state	<i>Curriculum and Instruction</i>	Adapted and modified	0.973, 0.986,	5-point Likert Scale

	<p>university translates its strategic assets into mandated academic outcomes.</p>	<p>“The curriculum is aligned with industry standards and regional/national development goals.”</p> <p><i>Support to Students</i></p> <p>“Student programs receive sufficient budget allocation for effective implementation.”</p> <p><i>Research</i></p> <p>“The state university effectively implements its approved research agenda.”</p> <p><i>Extension and Community Involvement</i></p> <p>“The extension programs are aligned with local/regional/national development priorities.”</p>	<p>from AACCUP [27]</p>	<p>0.986 and 0.991</p>	<p>5=Strongly Agree</p> <p>4=Agree</p> <p>3=Neutral</p> <p>2=Disagree</p> <p>1=Strongly Disagree</p>
--	--	---	-------------------------	------------------------	--